

# INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

## LESSON FOR JUNE 22

### BLINDING EFFECT OF SIN.

LESSON TEXT—Amos 6:1-6.  
GOLDEN TEXT—"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live." Amos 5:14.

Amos was the third of the minor prophets and prophesied concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, about 790 B. C. His name means "burden" and his prophecy reveals a sore one. Though outwardly prosperous, and victorious upon the battlefield, indeed Israel's "golden age," yet this prophet reveals that it was an age of lead as well, for he shows that associated with political and material prosperity was a gross moral corruption; even as was the case in the declining days of the Roman Empire and as was the state of France just preceding the days of the French Revolution. This is certainly a lesson for our day. Blessed as we have been so abundantly, we need to pause and examine the framework of our political and moral life.

#### God's Proclamation.

"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion" (verse 1). What an indictment, and of how many can this be said in this present day. The state of Israel spoken of by Amos has come down through the ages. We must not, of course, suppose that all were in that state, but rather the majority. Anyone at all interested or familiar with present-day church life knows how few are concerned with the fundamental work of the church, viz., seeking to save the lost. Not only our indifference to those of heathenism but of our neighbors and companions. How much are we concerned with the groans and the cry of intemperance except perhaps, to shed a few crocodile tears and straightway forget? But God by the mouth of the prophet proclaims "Woe." We are not called to "ease" but to work, not alone to enjoy but to suffer. Tim. 2:12. If we are to escape the woe we must bestir ourselves and not be at ease. This of course refers to the war being waged against evil and not to any matter of our personal salvation. Phil. 4:7, R. V. Pet. 5:7. This is the ease of indifference to God's honor and the peril of men out of Christ.

The prophet then points to the nations that bordered about (verse 2) and warns them that like as they had come and gone, risen to eminence and power and sunken to obscurity and decay, so also will Israel unless it bestir itself. America is strong and proud but is just as weak as those that have gone before. We could not stand half-lame and half-free, no more can we stand half-intoxicated and half-sober. We may seek to put off the evil day (verse 3) but whatever we sow that shall we also reap. Gal. 6:7. Israel relied upon the fortified mountains round about, only to find later support to be a broken reed, for the day of reckoning came (9:10). Sinners scoff at warning, hell is a myth, judgment and death a long way off. 2 Pet. 3:4. Governments put off the proper course of action for political reasons and the people perish. Witness intemperance in America, opium (due to England's perfidy) in China, and slavery in Africa. Can God be a righteous God and overlook these things? "Where there is no vision (knowledge of the need and the resources at our command) the people perish," e. g., throw off restraint R. V. Prov. 29:18. Lacking a vision, nations, families and individuals alike perish. Rather than to face the issue (verse 4) we give ourselves to ease and to the enjoyments of the sensual nature. "Because sentence against the evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" Eccl. 8:11; and so to the chant of music (verse 5) they drink bowls of wine (verse 6) and anoint themselves with choice ointments but are not concerned about the affliction of Joseph, the chosen ones of God.

#### Display of Wealth.

Here we have a terrific indictment. These people abounded in "superfluities" (margin) suggesting something of the lavish display of wealth we are constantly beholding, each seeking to outvie the other, whereas God is calling the Christian to a life of simplicity as the price of power. The temperate way some professed Christians load up with diamonds, the straining to attract attention by means of dress, as well as other forms of display, demands that we pause and ask what will be the outcome, let alone the effect upon the Kingdom. See I Peter 3:3, 4; I Tim. 2:9, 10; Luke 6:24, 25; Matt. 16:24.

"Therefore" (verse 7). "Back of every effect is an adequate cause." Back of the fall of Babylon was a corrupt court, back of the fall of Rome an enervated, morally emancipated people; back of the fall of Jerusalem a disobedient race who trespassed once too often.

In bringing this lesson before our younger scholars we can tell the story of Israel's outward prosperity and call attention to the fact that like the tall oak, if its heart is rotten, it will fall and decay. Emphasize various other kinds of intemperance, in speech, games, wealth, tobacco, etc.

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Debtor—Very well; then you can call every Saturday.—London Opinion.

## The Eagle's Call

### He Answered It and the Call of Honor

By CLARISSA MACKIE

It promised to be another blistering day, and so John Forrest arose in the early dawn and enjoyed his cold tub in the blighting presence of the disappearing bath boy. Later, clad in spot white, he ate his breakfast in the cool shade of the north veranda.

The first rays of the rising sun were gliding the top of the compound wall when the gate opened noisily and admitted a Chinese in the livery of the consulate servants. He approached and delivered a parcel into Forrest's outstretched hand.

Forrest weighed the long, flat package in his palm for a thoughtful moment. Every time he received an unexpected letter or parcel he was conscious of a throb of expectation that he was to be called back to prove his mettle. Something had happened several years ago, when he had been in the war department, that resulted in his resignation and immediate departure for a foreign country. It was the matter of a neglected duty which terminated in the loss to the department of \$50,000. Forrest was young in those days, and his Virginian hot blood was more engrossed in the scattering of wild oats than in the careful execution of his duties.

The chief of the department had been a friend of his dead father's and he had talked to John Forrest as a parent might have done. "I can't save you from the consequences of your carelessness, my boy," he had said sadly. "No one but yourself can do that, and it may take years to re-establish confidence in your ability. You better accept that clerkship with my brother's banking house in Shanghai and some day when you can make good come home again."

"I don't like the idea of being banished," muttered John sullenly. "Can't I work and pay back the money? Or if the government lost that sum through my carelessness perhaps I might be able to save a loss some time."

The older man brought the palm of his hand to the table with a sharp smack. "Some day, not now, John! You go ahead and take this berth in Shanghai, and I give you my word of honor that if ever I see the opportunity whereby you can step in and make good on that mistake of yours I'll send you a message. Because of my position I cannot write you or commit myself in any way, but you will understand when the message comes that your country needs your services and that your opportunity to make good has come at last. Have patience and wait."

"Very good, sir," John Forrest leaped to his feet with a new light in his young eyes. "I'll sail next week on the Cathay from San Francisco. You won't forget to send for me, sir?"

"On my honor, John, and you will leave everything and come, my boy?"

Involuntarily John raised his right hand as he spoke gravely. "I will come whenever you call, sir." And so it was settled.

That had all happened years before, and still John Forrest was waiting for the call of his country to make restitution to her for the amount which had been lost. In the meantime, sobered by his bitter experience in the capital of his country, he had worked night and day at his new situation in Shanghai. In that gay city on the Hwangpu river there were many opportunities for money making, and John Forrest was beginning to see where he might someday be a financial power in the great treaty port of the east when this hot summer morning the message came.

He knew as soon as he had opened the package. All the box contained was a long bronze feather from the pinion of an eagle and a brief scrawl on a slip of paper, "The eagle calls."

Then came a moment of temptation to the man. He knew that very day a steamer sailed for San Francisco. If he missed sailing today it meant that his journey would be delayed for three days. If he did sail today large interests which had occupied his mind lately and which would come to a climax today would go to the wall for lack of his manipulation. If he could have only one more day here his future affluence would be assured. His going today meant financial ruin.

All at once he seemed to see the luxurious equipment of the chief's private office and heard his own voice saying earnestly, "I will come whenever you call, sir." His tilted chair crashed to the floor, and he sent servants flying in a dozen different directions.

A brief note to one of his partners conveyed the information that he was summoned home at once and that the deal must be put through without him if possible. He inclosed a power of attorney and thus washed his hands of the matter. An hour later found him swaying recklessly along the Bubbling Well road in a ricksha, and he gained the long wharf just in time to catch the tug that was conveying its last load of passengers to the steamer lying out in the mouth of the river several miles below the city.

The morning he arrived in Washing-

ton he telephoned to his old chief from the hotel where he was stopping.

"I am here," was his brief report. "Good boy, John! I will call on you this evening at 9 o'clock."

It was a short story and soon told. Somebody had stolen plans and important documents from the war office, and the secret service men were combing the country for the thief. While it was out of order for this commission to be placed in the hands of an outsider, the chief had wanted to give Forrest the chance to redeem himself, and at the same time he knew if the young man was successful that breach of red tape would be forgiven because of Forrest's former connection with the office and the unhappy circumstances of his dismissal.

"I'll give you the same clue that the others have. The papers are supposed to have been taken by a small, dark man who had been hanging around the building for several weeks. He was traced, the morning following the theft, to the railroad station, where he bought a ticket for New Orleans. At that city it was learned that he had bought a ticket for some station further along the line, but under what name it is not known. The man is supposed to have been employed by somebody—it's for you to discover, John—and even if you find him you may not be able to get track of the instigators of the theft. The other fellows have eight weeks the start of you. I couldn't cable, or I would have done so. Now, go!"

So John Forrest started on his quest to redeem his reputation. His search was as thorough as it could be made, and he found genuine satisfaction in the knowledge that he had learned more about his suspected man than had his brother sleuths.

First he learned that the small, dark suspect had been seen with a companion of the same complexion, but of stouter build. This man had not accompanied the first man on his flight through the south, but Forrest learned that the stout man had taken passage on a steamer sailing from New York for Havana, from whence he had sailed to a Mexican port. All this investigation took weeks of valuable time, but once settled on the trail of Manuel Corta, the stout man, for Forrest had even learned the man's name, the American's pursuit was unflagging until at last it terminated in a small village in the heart of the Sierra des Blas mountains.

Inn there was none, and because he wore American clothing dark eyes peered insolently at Forrest from around adobe huts or from lazily swinging hammocks under the peach trees. If Corta had not moved on the man would soon be apprised of the American's presence there and, taking alarm, would be away. Forrest finally found quarters in the home of the village water carrier, and because the vendor of the precious fluid is always a notorious gossip he soon learned where Corta might be found. In a broken mixture of Spanish, Indian and here and there an English word or a graphic gesture Forrest communicated with the water carrier. The generous sum of money he thrust into the brown hand made the man his slave.

The moon was setting over the shoulder of the highest mountain when the water carrier slipped back through the thorny undergrowth and motioned the American to pass through. Forrest pressed forward and saw in the light of a lantern three men. The first answered the description of the small dark man who had been traced to New Orleans; the second could be no other than Manuel Corta, who held a package wrapped in oilskin covering. The identity of the third man caused him to gasp for breath.

Tall and thin, his white face showing strained and haggard in the light, was the nephew of his old chief in the department. Blake Finlay and he had been chums in the old days before Forrest had made his mistake. What was Finlay doing here? Was he not confidential secretary to his uncle? Forrest's heart sank. If Finlay's quest was the same as his own he had failed in his quest, the eagle's call had been in vain, and Forrest might never have another opportunity to redeem himself.

But now the loud and angry words of the men fell on his ears, and he was conscious that the American had grasped the package and hidden it in his coat while the dark men were expostulating.

"You have tricked us!" spluttered the man Corta. "You accepted our bribe and secured the documents for us, and now that we have made rendezvous and are only waiting to deliver them to the general and receive the reward you have backed us down and want your papers back! Coward!" He drew a knife and leaped at Finlay, and his companion sprang to his aid.

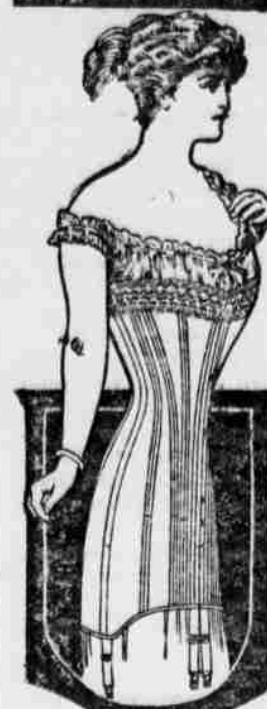
It was Forrest's quick shot that sent the knife spinning out of one murderer's hand, while the second report was followed by a yell of rage from the small man and instant retreat. Blake Finlay leaped against a tree and stared at his rescuer.

"You ought to be John Forrest," he said thickly. "If you have heard what this man says you understand the situation. I've got the papers back again, and I hope that will wipe out the offense. I can fix it so they will appear to have been mislaid; but, by heaven, Forrest, it was a narrow shave for me! I must have been crazy to have yielded to their suggestions."

Forrest's hopes sank. The papers would go back to Washington and the bottom would drop out of the mystery. The detectives would be recalled, and there would be no opportunity for Forrest to redeem his reputation.

There was only one thing to do—to write to the chief that he had failed in his quest and to return to China and once more await the eagle's call. And he went.

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## BARRETT.

June 16, 1913.

Harry Boatman and wife and Herbert Fairley were guests of Joe Morrow and wife, Sunday.

Forty-six of the relatives and friends gathered at the home of Wm. Webb, Sunday, the occasion being Mr. and Mrs. Webb's 25th wedding anniversary. A bountiful dinner was served and a most enjoyable time was had.

Thomas Adams, of Lees Creek, is visiting his sister, Mrs. Carey Pummel.

Aunt Lydia Mercer and Mrs. Della Morrow were guests at the home of Wm. Carey, of near Marshall, Wednesday.

Herbert H. Price, of St. Louis, Mo., and sister, Stella, of Coffeyville, Kan., have been visiting their aunt, Mrs. Hester Holt, the past two weeks.

Mrs. Hester Holt and her guests spent last Thursday at the Caves and visited relatives at Centerfield and took in the Falls the last of the week.

Mrs. Fred Ulen, of Wampson, Pa., is visiting her parents, O. M. Stevens and wife.

Rev. Milner and wife dined at the home of Emma Bussey, recently.

Miss Helen Rowe, who spent the winter with her aunt, Mrs. Luther Hill, at Whitlitt, Cal., has returned home.

Charles Johnson and family, were guests of Raymond Clements and family, Sunday.

W. E. Chrisman and family entertained Sunday, Clarence Chrisman

and wife, and Wm. Indwick and wife, of East Danville.

J. S. Lovett and wife entertained Sunday, Henson Creamer and wife, and Anderson McKinney and family.

W. W. Wolfe and family had as their guests Sunday, Frank Shoemaker and family, George Gorman and family and Mrs. J. H. Jones and daughter, Mildred.

A good vest was found on the road leading from Frank Shoemaker's to Boston. The owner may secure it at the home of W. E. Chrisman, Bell Phone No. 297 R. 6.

Mrs. Bell Winegar and two daughters, Goldie and Manda, were guests of Wm. Rowe and wife, Sunday.

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